

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 SAJ-01 IO-13 ACDA-07 OMB-01

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R 301536Z AUG 76

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INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
USIA WASHDC
DIA WASHDC
CINCPAC
AMEMBASSY SEOUL

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E.O. 16552: N/A

TAGS: PFOR UR US KN

SUBJ: SOVIETS CRITICIZE U.S. FOR KOREAN TENSIONS

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. IN MOSCOW'S FIRST PUBLIC COMMENTARY
ON RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN KOREA, IZVESTIYA (AUG 28)
CHIDES THE U.S. FOR ALLEGEDLY RAISING TENSIONS OVER TREE
TRIMMING AND ENDORSES THE PRO-NORTH KOREAN UN RESOLUTION.
THE COMMENTARY MENTIONS BUT DOES NOT DESCRIBE THE AUG 18
INCIDENT, AND SEEKS TO SHOW THAT THE U.S. REACTION WAS
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BOTH PROVOCATIVE AND UNNECESSARY. END SUMMARY

2. THE IZVESTIYA COMMENTARY, BY P. DAL'NOV, IS CALLED "PEACE AND SECURITY FOR THE KOREAN PENINSULA" AND IS OSTENSIBLY PEGGED TO THE PRO-DPRK UN RESOLUTION WHICH MOSCOW SUPPORTS AS A CO-SPONSOR. DAL'NOV CITES THE TITLE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE RESOLUTION, THEN SAY THAT SUCH AN INITIATIVE IS MORE NECESSARY NOW THAN EVER "IN THE LIGHT OF THE NEW OUTBURST OF TENSIONS ON THE KOREAN PENINSULA RECENTLY". THE ARTICLE CITES THE NORHT KOREAN CENTRAL TELEGRAPH AGENCY'S CHARGE THAT THE U.S. AND SOUTH KOREA, FOLOWING THE AUG 18 INCIDENT, "STAGED A STRONG NEW MILITARY PROVOCATION ON AUG 21", IN WHICH OVER 300 U.S. AND SOUTH KOREAN SOLDIERS TOOK PART. BACKING THEM UP ON MILITARY ALERT, SAYS IZVESTIYA, WERE U.S. HELICOPTERS AND BOMBERS, U.S. AND SOUTH KOREAN TROOPS AND THE MIDWAY TASK FORCE, ALL COMBINED IN A MASSIVE DEMONSTRATION OF FORCE. IZVESTIYA THENASKS SARCASTICALLY WHETHER SUCH DANGEROUS STEPS WERE NECESSARY TO CUT DOWN A TREE WHICH ALLEGEDLY OBSTRUCTED AN OBERVATION POST. ANSWERING THE QUESTION INDIRECTLY, IZVESTIYA CITES U.S. "OFFICIAL CIRCLES", FOLLOWING THE NSC MEETING OF AUG 19, SAYING THAT CONFLICT IN KOREA WAS /UNLIKELY". THE ARTICLE CONTINUES THAT THE U.S. DOES THIS SORT OF THING FROM TIME TO TIME TO IMPRESS THE WORLD AND CITES THE STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN AS NOT RULING OUT THE USE OF FORCE AGAINST NORTH KOREA.

3. DAL'NOV THEN SAYS THAT "POSITIVE CHANGES" IN THE WORLD AND THE PROCESS OF DETENTE SHOULD MAKE IT POSSIBLE TO RESOLVE SUCH MATTERS THROUGH "CONSTRUCTIVE, BUSINESS-LIKE EXCHANGES" AND THAT PYONGYANG'S POSITION FAVORS PEACE AND SECURITY IN THE PENINSULA. DAL'NOV CONCLUDES BY PLEDGING MOSCOW'S "COMPLETE SUPPORT FOR THE KOREAN PEOPLE'S STRUGGLE" FOR THE END OF FOREIGN INTERFERENCE IN THEIR AFFAIRS, FOR THE WITHDRAWAL OF U.S. FORCES "WHICH, AS HAS AGAIN BEEN SHOWN BY RECENT EVENTS, ARE THE CHIEF SOURCE OF CONTINUING TENSIONS IN KOREA", AND FOR NATIONAL REUNIFICATION.

4. COMMENT: THIS COMMENTARY IS BY FAR THE FULLEST SOVIET MEDIA TREATMENT OF THE AFTERMATH OF THE AUG 18 LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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INDICDENT. EXPANDING ON EARLIER SOVIET TREATMENT, IT BLAMES THE U.S. (AND SOUTH KOREA) FOR INCREASING TENSIONS IN KOREA NEEDLESSLY. BUT IT DOES NOT DESCRIBE OR COMMENT ON THE INCIDENT ITSELF NOR DOES IT EVEN IMPLICITLY CHARGE THAT THE INDICENT WAS STATED BY THE U.S. AND SOUTH KOREANS. THE ENDORSEMENT FOR PYONGYANG'S UN POSITION IS TIED TO THE NEED TO REMOVE THE SOURCES OF TENSION AND THEREBY TO MOVE TOWARD THE PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM. AS SUCH,

IT CONSTITUTES STRONG BUT QUALIFIED SOVIET
BACKING FOR THE PRO-DPRK UN RESOLUTION, BUT DOES NOT
IMPLY SUPPORT FOR PYONGYANG'S POSITION IN THE INCIDENT.
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